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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6657th meeting of the Security Council, held on 14 November 2011, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Central African region", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council strongly condemns the ongoing attacks carried out by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in parts of central Africa, which pose a continuing threat to regional security. The Council reiterates its grave concern at the atrocities committed by the LRA, which have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences, including the displacement of over 440,000 people across the region. The Council remains deeply concerned that its previous calls for the LRA to cease its attacks have not been heeded.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the continued violations of international humanitarian law and the abuses of human rights by the LRA. The Security Council condemns further the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence, and abductions. The Council demands an immediate end to all attacks by the LRA, particularly those on civilians, urges LRA leaders to release all those abducted, and insists that all LRA elements put an end to such practices, and surrender and disarm.

"The Security Council encourages the remaining LRA fighters to leave the group's ranks and take advantage of offers of reintegration support. Over the course of the LRA's existence, more than 12,000 combatants and abductees have left the LRA's ranks and have been integrated and reunited with their families through Uganda's Amnesty Commission. The Security Council emphasises its support for continued efforts across the affected countries to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate former LRA fighters back into normal life, and notes the recent successful escape of 30 women and children from two LRA groups on the border between the Republic of South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Council acknowledges the important ongoing efforts of MONUSCO's Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement office to encourage and facilitate further LRA defections, and requests that the UN works with regional governments to expand these efforts across the LRA-affected region.

"The Security Council commends the important efforts undertaken by the militaries of the Central African Republic (CAR), the DRC, the Republic of

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South Sudan and Uganda to address the threat posed by the LRA, and urges those militaries to coordinate and concert their efforts to apprehend Joseph Kony and LRA top commanders in the coming months and bring them to justice. The Council recognises the challenges the Governments in the region face, and welcomes efforts by the international community, in coordination with the African Union and United Nations, to enhance the capacity of regional militaries to conduct effective operations against LRA top commanders and better protect civilians; it notes, for example, the efforts by the United States to work with regional militaries. The Council underlines the need for all action against the LRA to be conducted in compliance with applicable international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.

"The Security Council commends the AU's enhanced engagement on this issue through its regional cooperation initiative for the elimination of the LRA, and its efforts to establish a Regional Intervention Force, a Joint Operations Centre and a Joint Co-ordination Mechanism. The Security Council further commends the support provided by the UN Secretary-General to the AU Commission through the planning process and encourages the AU to promote coordination on LRA issues by sharing its counter-LRA plans at the earliest opportunity. The Council urges the prompt appointment of the proposed AU Special Envoy for the LRA-affected areas, and expresses hope that this official will work quickly to solidify cooperation between regional governments and promote a regional framework for the defection, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of LRA fighters.

"The Security Council underlines the primary responsibility of States in the LRA-affected region to protect civilians and calls upon them to take all appropriate measures in this regard. The Council notes at the same time the important role being played by UN missions in the region, particularly through the adoption of protection measures such as community liaison, and stresses the need for them to play a major role in the co-ordination amongst all those engaged in addressing the threat posed by the LRA. The Council requests that MONUSCO and UNMISS seek, within their mandates and capabilities, to increase protection activities in LRA-affected areas over coming months, with a particular focus on the communities who are most vulnerable. The Council also welcomes BINUCA's increased focus on LRA issues in CAR and encourages further action by the UN to address the needs of LRA-affected communities in CAR. The Security Council encourages all UN offices and missions in the LRA-affected region to continue to enhance information-sharing and coordination with all relevant actors, and welcomes the preparation of a regional human rights report on the LRA.

"The Security Council commends efforts by the European Union, the United States, and other donors to provide humanitarian assistance to LRA-affected populations in CAR, DRC, and the Republic of South Sudan. The Council stresses the need for an enhanced, comprehensive, and more regional approach to the humanitarian situation, including assistance to victims of sexual violence and other attacks, and reiterates the requirement for all parties to promote and ensure safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organisations to the civilian population. The Council calls upon the international community to provide support to capacity building, good governance and humanitarian efforts in LRA-affected areas.

"The Security Council welcomes the Secretary General's report on the LRA, and commends the efforts made by the UN Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), in coordination with United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU), to engage with the UN missions in the LRA-affected region, the AU and affected Central African States to facilitate co-operation on issues related to countering the threat posed by the LRA. The Security Council encourages UNOCA to work with the UN missions and the AU to develop a regional strategy for international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding assistance in the LRA-affected area, enhancing cross-border mechanisms to improve civilian protection, early warning capacity, humanitarian access and response, and appropriate reintegration support for those returning from displacement, abductees and ex-combatants. as well as strengthening the overall capacity of affected States to extend their authority throughout their respective territories.

"The Security Council recalls the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants for three remaining LRA leaders on charges of, among other things, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and the enlistment of children through abduction, and encourages all States to cooperate with the Ugandan authorities and the International Criminal Court in order to implement those warrants, and to bring to justice those responsible for the atrocities. The Council recalls its statement of June 2006 (PRST/2006/28) and reaffirms the vital importance of promoting justice and the rule of law, including respect for human rights, as an indispensible element for lasting peace.

"The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General keep it informed on developments in relation to the LRA, including through a single report on both UNOCA and the LRA to be submitted before 31 May 2012 identifying opportunities for improved information sharing between the AU, LRA-affected states and UN missions, and outlining the role of UNOCA in co-ordinating activity against the LRA."